

**Forest Service Manual
National Headquarters - Washington Office
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**Forest Service Manual 2300 – Recreation, Wilderness, And Related Resource Management
Chapter 2330 - Forest Service Planning, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Developed
Recreation Sites**

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Digest: Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

2330: Changes chapter title from “Publicly Managed Recreation Opportunities” to “Forest Service Planning, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Developed Recreation Sites” and updates directive in its entirety.

2330.3: Updates policy statements.

2330.4: Updates responsibilities for consistency throughout chapter.

2330.5 and 2330.11 through 2336: Removes codes, captions, and direction.

2330.6: Changes section title from “References” to “Safety” and sets forth direction.

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Chapter 2330 - Forest Service Planning, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Developed Recreation Sites

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This chapter addresses Forest Service planning, design, operation, and maintenance of developed recreation sites such as campgrounds, picnic areas, observation sites, developed swimming areas, and visitor and interpretive centers.

Developed recreation sites may be operated and maintained by Forest Service personnel or by a concessioner under a special use permit. This chapter applies only to planning, design, operation, and maintenance of developed recreation sites by the Forest Service, not to operation and maintenance of developed recreation sites by concessioners under a special use permit. The Forest Service is not responsible for operation and maintenance of developed recreation sites under a special use permit. Concessioners are responsible for operation and maintenance of the concessions covered by their permits, including but not limited to inspections of their concessions before and during their operating season and identification and mitigation of hazards at their concessions. See FSM 2340 and form FS-2700-34, Prospectus for Campground and Related Granger-Thye Concessions, for direction on issuance and administration of special use permits for operation and maintenance of developed recreation sites by concessioners.

2330.1 – Authority

See FSM 2301 for the authorities governing all types of recreation opportunities on National Forest System lands.

1. Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801-6814). This Act is the sole recreation fee authority for the Federal land management agencies. It authorizes the Forest Service to charge standard and expanded amenity recreation fees and to require and charge fees for special recreation permits. Fee revenues may be retained and spent by the Forest Service in accordance with the Act's requirements.
2. Architectural Barriers Act (ABA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151 *et seq.*). This Act requires that all facilities designed, constructed, altered, or leased by a Federal agency comply with applicable accessibility guidelines.
3. Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794 and 794d). Section 504 of this Act (29 U.S.C. 794) prohibits Federal agencies and recipients of Federal financial assistance from discriminating against any person with a disability. Section 508 of this Act (29 U.S.C. 794d) requires that all electronic and information technology purchased or developed by a Federal agency allow persons with disabilities to have access to and use of the information and data that are comparable to those provided to persons without disabilities.
4. Enforcement of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Programs or Activities of USDA (7 CFR Parts 15e and 15b). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations implementing section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as it applies to programs and activities conducted by USDA are found at 7 CFR Part 15e. The USDA regulations implementing section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as it applies to USDA-assisted programs are found at 7 CFR Part 15b. These provisions address program accessibility;

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requirements for accessible programs in new, altered, or existing facilities; accessibility transition planning; accessible communication requirements; and compliance procedures.

5. Section 8104 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) (25 U.S.C. 3054). Upon the Forest Service’s approval of a request from an Indian tribe, this Act authorizes the Forest Service to close temporarily to public access specifically identified National Forest System lands to protect the privacy of tribal activities for traditional and cultural purposes. Section 8102(5) of the Act defines the term “Indian tribe” as any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or other community, the name of which is included on a list published by the Secretary of Interior pursuant to section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (24 U.S.C. 479a-1). Section 8102(9) of the Act defines the term “traditional and cultural purpose” with respect to a definable use, area, or practice to mean that the use, area, or practice is identified by an Indian tribe as traditional or cultural because of the long-established significance or ceremonial nature of the use, area, or practice to the Indian tribe.

2330.2 – Objectives

1. Provide a broad spectrum of outdoor recreation opportunities consistent with the applicable recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class that reflects a balance of environmental, economic, and social factors and the natural and cultural landscape.
2. Utilize sustainable practices at developed recreation sites and facilities operated and maintained by the Forest Service.
3. Follow applicable national quality standards at developed recreation sites and facilities operated and maintained by the Forest Service in accordance with FSH 2309.13, Chapter 50.
4. Provide developed recreation sites and facilities that serve the interests and needs of users, to the extent feasible and appropriate.
5. Restore recreation settings that have been affected by declining ecosystem health and inappropriate use.
6. Identify, evaluate, and mitigate natural hazards at developed recreation sites operated and maintained by the Forest Service, to the extent deemed feasible and appropriate by the local Forest Service official and in accordance with applicable national quality standards (FSH 2309.13, ch. 50).

2330.3 – Policy

1. Plan and design developed recreation site in accordance with FSH 2309.13, Chapter 10.

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2. Operate and maintain developed recreation sites in accordance with this chapter and FSH 2309.13, Chapter 50.
3. Use the land management planning process (36 CFR Part 219 and FSM 1920 and 2310) to identify appropriate areas for developed recreation sites.
4. Develop, operate, and maintain developed recreation sites and facilities that support or enhance natural and cultural resource-based activities that are economically sustainable.
5. Utilize a broad set of resources including appropriations, cooperative relationships with nonprofit and for-profit entities, intergovernmental collaboration, and recreation fee revenues to provide the full spectrum of recreation and heritage settings and opportunities.
6. Analyze use of existing and proposed developed recreation sites and facilities to monitor visitor satisfaction, use patterns (including those based on cultural preferences), and environmental and economic sustainability to assist in determining options for future operation. Options for future operation may include expansion, new construction or alteration of sites, continued Forest Service operation and maintenance, new or revised recreation fees, cooperator or volunteer operation, concessioner operation and maintenance, intergovernmental cooperation, or closure.
7. Use ROS guidelines (FSM 2310 and FSH 2309.13, ch. 10, sec. 11.1, ex. 01) when planning, designing, operating, and maintaining developed recreation sites for existing and new uses.
8. Prepare a site development plan and conduct the requisite environmental analysis before constructing, expanding, rehabilitating or adapting developed recreation sites to new uses.
9. Utilize universal design (FSH 2309.13, ch. 10, sec. 10.5) when designing developed recreation sites, facilities, and programs to accommodate the abilities of all people, including people with disabilities, to the greatest extent possible.
10. Ensure that all new, altered, or rehabilitated developed recreation sites, facilities, and constructed features comply with applicable provisions of Federal and Forest Service accessibility guidelines and standards. The Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines (FSORAG) apply to all developed recreation sites, facilities, and constructed features in the National Forest System addressed in the FSORAG when it sets a standard that is equal to or higher than that established by Federal accessibility guidelines or standards.
11. Ensure that all new or altered trails comply with the most stringent applicable provisions of Federal and Forest Service accessibility guidelines and standards. The Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines (FSTAG) apply to trails in the National Forest System

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when the FSTAG sets a standard that is equal to or higher than that established by Federal accessibility guidelines or standards.

12. Manage the recreation fee program in accordance with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FSH 2309.13, ch. 30).
13. Utilize appropriate grants and agreements to involve nonprofit entities and other governmental entities in Forest Service operation and maintenance of developed recreation sites, facilities, and programs.
14. Where appropriate, authorize concessioner operation of developed recreation sites at a development scale of 3, 4, or 5 (FSH 2309.13, ch. 50, sec. 50.5, ex. 01) in conformance with FSM 2344.33. Close developed recreation sites and facilities that no longer meet user preferences, are not environmentally sustainable, or cannot be operated and maintained in accordance with FSM 2330.2 and 2330.3 and FSH 2309.13, Chapter 50, section 53.39.
15. Ensure that requests for temporary closure by Indian tribes to protect the privacy of tribal activities for traditional and cultural purposes are considered and access provided to the maximum extent practicable, in accordance with section 8104 of FCEA (25 U.S.C. 3054), when operating and maintaining developed recreation sites and facilities.

2330.31 – Recreation Regional Advisory Committees (Recreation RACs)

The Secretary of Agriculture (Secretary) approves the charters of Recreation Resource Advisory Committees (Recreation RACs) and selects and approves appointments to the Recreation RACs. The Secretary also must concur with any rejections of Recreation RAC recommendations submitted to the Secretary by the Chief of the Forest Service (Chief).

If the Secretary concurs with a rejection of Recreation RAC recommendations submitted by the Chief, the Chief submits a notice that identifies the reasons for the rejection to the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate at least 30 days before implementation of the recreation fee proposal pertaining to the recommendations.

2330.4 – Responsibility

2330.4a – Washington Office Director of Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources

The Washington Office Director of Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources is responsible for:

1. Establishing and maintaining directives for the planning and design of developed recreation sites and for Forest Service operation and maintenance of developed recreation sites.

2. Maintaining a list of all the Agency's recreation fee sites and areas.
3. Establishing the procedures for the development and implementation of an appropriate risk management program for developed recreation sites.

2330.4b – Regional Foresters

Regional Foresters are responsible for:

1. Reviewing and approving the design narrative and drawings for developed recreation sites in their region with construction costs exceeding \$1,000,000.
2. Overseeing Forest Service operation and maintenance of developed recreation sites in their region to ensure compliance with applicable directives.
3. Setting standard and expanded amenity recreation fees for recreation sites and areas and granting discounts and free use as appropriate pursuant to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act.
4. Recommending to the Chief appointments to Recreation RACs in their region.
5. Approving recreation fee proposals that have been recommended by the appropriate Recreation RAC.
6. Recommending to the Chief rejections of Recreation RAC recommendations.
7. Developing and implementing a system for conducting periodic risk management reviews of developed recreation sites.
8. Reviewing and approving site development plans where overnight facilities are located in a high-hazard location.

2330.4c – Forest and Grassland Supervisors

Forest and Grassland Supervisors are responsible for:

1. Reviewing and approving the design narrative and drawings for developed recreation sites in their administrative unit with construction costs of \$1,000,000 or less.
2. Overseeing Forest Service operation and maintenance of developed recreation sites in their administrative unit to ensure compliance with applicable directives.
3. Approving operation and maintenance plans for developed recreation sites in their administrative unit.

4. Preparing a risk management action plan for developed recreation sites in their administrative unit with measurable goals, responsibilities, action items, and due dates.

2330.4d – District Rangers

District Rangers are responsible for:

1. Consistent with applicable directives, preparing and annually updating operation and maintenance plans for developed recreation sites in their ranger district.
2. Ensuring operation and maintenance of developed recreation sites in their ranger district in accordance with the applicable operation and maintenance plan.
3. Conducting recreation fee compliance and enforcement in coordination with the local Law Enforcement and Investigations staff.

2330.6 – Safety

All outdoor recreational activities on National Forest System lands, including activities at recreation sites, have inherent risks due to the natural setting in which they occur. Recreation sites present inherent risks to users in varying degrees depending on the level of site modifications and the activity involved.

In general, the inherent risk at recreation sites decreases as the development scale increases. For example, recreation sites with a development scale of 0, 1, or 2, which are characterized by uneven, natural terrain and little management control of activities, are likely to have greater inherent risks than developed recreation sites with a development scale of 3, 4 or 5, which are designed and developed for specific public uses, often having hard-surfaced or paved walkways and activity areas and a high degree of regimentation. In addition, generally the inherent risk at recreation sites increases as the risk associated with activities at the site increases. For example, a snow play area generally is more likely to have greater inherent risks than a picnic area.

Individuals engaging in outdoor recreational activities on National Forest System lands assume these inherent risks.

2330.6a – Risk Assessments

Conduct periodic risk assessments to identify hazards, set priorities, allocate resources, implement action plans, and reassess effectiveness or risk reduction activities at developed recreation sites, to the extent deemed feasible and appropriate by the local Forest Service official. Risk assessments may be appropriate for such hazards as wildfire, hazard trees, geological hazards, flooding and flash floods, and wildlife. Appropriate skilled professionals should be included in preparing risk assessments.

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Based on the finding of a risk assessment, and to the extent deemed feasible and appropriate by the local Forest Service official, consider minimizing, mitigating, or eliminating risks at developed recreation sites, taking into account resource considerations such as scenic values, the ability to maintain safety devices, other aspects of feasibility and effectiveness, changing conditions, funding, the applicable ROS class, the amount of visitor use, potential impacts on wildlife, the need for maintenance, and other factors deemed appropriate by the local Forest Service official (FSH 2309.13, ch. 50).

2330.6b – Flash Flood Warning Systems

1. Do not install, manage, or operate a flash flood warning system.
2. Responsible officials may cooperate with other Federal, State, or local authorities that manage or operate flash flood warning systems.
3. If a Forest Service developed recreation site is located within the scope of a flash flood warning system managed or operated by another entity, the local Forest Service official remains responsible for any risk analysis and risk management responses deemed feasible and appropriate by the local Forest Service official, including but not limited to potential site relocation or change in use of the site, identification of evacuation routes and safety zones, seasonal closures, appropriate signing, and educational efforts.